GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4826
ANSWERED ON:20.12.2000
DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF RELIGION
P.C. THOMAS

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether discrimination amongst Scheduled Castes is prevalent in India on the basis of religious faith;

(b) whether Christians of Scheduled Caste origin are denied benefits of Scheduled Castes;

(c) if so, the details thereof and reasons therefor;

(d) whether such people are given rights of Scheduled Caste once they denounce Christianity;

(e) if so, the reasons therefor and steps being taken to end such discrimination;

(f) whether several organizations of Dalits, Christians and Dalit Christians havedemanded that Dalit Christians be given the rights of Scheduled Castes;
(g) if so, the details thereof;
(h) whether the Government had sought to bring a Bill in the Lok Sabha accepting this demand in 1996; and
(i) if so, the present status thereof and the time by which such a legislation is likely to be introduced?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND POWERMENT (SMT. MANEKA GANDHI)

(a)to(e) As per provision under the Constitution and orders issued thereunder the list of Scheduled Castes have been notified. Under these orders, no person who professes a religion different from the Hindu, the Sikh or the Buddhist religion is deemed to bea member of a Scheduled Caste.
Where a Scheduled Caste person gets converted to a religion, other thanHinduism or Sikhism or Buddhism and then reconverts himself back to Hinduism, the Sikhism or the Buddhism, he will be deemed to have reverted to his originalScheduled Castes, if he is accepted by the members of that particular caste as one among them.

(f) to (i) The matter has been under consideration as per approved modalities. However, no time frame can be assigned, as it requires consultation with several agencies.